News release

23 April 2007

New weather service for airport operations

World-leading aviation weather experts the Met Office has launched two new cost-effective web-based weather briefing services, designed especially for airport and Air Traffic Control (ATC) operations.

Recognising that almost 25% of aviation delays in Europe are caused by the weather, these new Airport and ATC Briefing Services from the Met Office offer an efficient and convenient way to bring weather to the heart of airport and control tower operations.

The new services from the Met Office will enable controllers and operational staff to identify potential weather-related delays and take appropriate action. This will lead to more efficient airspace and airport management – ultimately helping to increase safety and reduce costly delays.

Both services provide direct access to weather information using a web-based interface that is clear and user-friendly. Controllers and operations staff can examine the current weather conditions as well as forecasts of weather and hazards for the short term (six hours ahead) and graphical forecasts for their airport out to five days. This graphical facility is also available for other airports.

Services include 5-day forecasts featuring crosswinds and cloud base, at-a-glance colour-coded LVP index, airport warnings and decoded Terminal Aerodrome Forecasts (TAFs) and Meteorological Aerodrome Reports (METARs). In addition, detailed forecasts of more short-term hazards are included, such as towering convection, visibility, lightning risk and cloud cover.

Also available from this new Met Office service are fully interactive dynamic charts, where the user is provided with the facility to pan, zoom, step through and animate a sequence of data.

Optional round-the-clock access to the Met Office's leading aviation meteorologists is also available.

Doug Johnson, Head of Transport Business Unit at the Met Office said: "Over the next five years, it is anticipated that the European air traffic management network will grow significantly. The new services bring weather to the heart of operations, offering accurate and at-a-glance weather information to where it is needed most. It will be an invaluable aid, helping operational management and ATC at an airport stay on top of rapidly changing conditions and have the confidence to plan ahead".

ATC Briefing Service
Airport Briefing Service

Notes:

The UK Met Office is one of the world leaders in aviation meteorology, as one of only two World Area Forecast Centres and the UK's sole meteorology provider to the Civil Aviation Authority.

For further information:
Met Office Press Office +44 (0)1392 886655
E-mail: pressoffice@metoffice.gov.uk

Met Office Customer Centre 0870 900 0100
If you're outside the UK +44 (0)1392 885680

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